DEMOCRATIC
GERMAN REPORT

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MORE MONEY FOR SCHOOLS

E. German Budget For Education, Health

East Germany devotes far more money to education and health than West Germany, and the proportion is steadily rising, statistics published in Berlin show.

Altogether one third of East Germany's budget for 1953, which shows expenditure of 31,261,400,000 marks, was devoted to schools, health services, and other cultural purposes.

Expenditure per university student is almost three times as high as in West Germany; average classes in primary schools are much smaller in the East than in the West; and teachers have a starting wage twice as high in the East as they do in the West.

In pensions and health services too, East Germany is far ahead. Minimum pensions in the German Democratic Republic are 75 marks; in West Germany they are only 50 marks. In East Germany sick pay amounts to 90% of normal wages; in West Germany it is only 50% of the wage.

Many other interesting statistics on education and social services, given to the East German People's Chamber in a budget report on October 2nd, will be found on page 4 of this issue.

"Freedom" in West Germany

West German police batoned down survivors of nazi concentration camps who attempted to lay wreaths on the graves of their dead comrades in the Seelhorst Cemetery in Hanover, British Zone, on September 27th

After the police had brutally dispersed the small delegation of former concentration camp inmates, who were laying wreaths in a completely orderly fashion, they went on to tear the tributes from the graves and trample them underfoot.

At the same time a large concentration of police, equipped with pressure hoses, prevented another delegation of anti-nazis from laying wreaths on another monument to Hitler's victims at Maschsee.

Footnote: A few weeks ago, several thousands of former members of Rommel's Afrika Korps met for a fascist rally in Hanover, and received a civic reception.

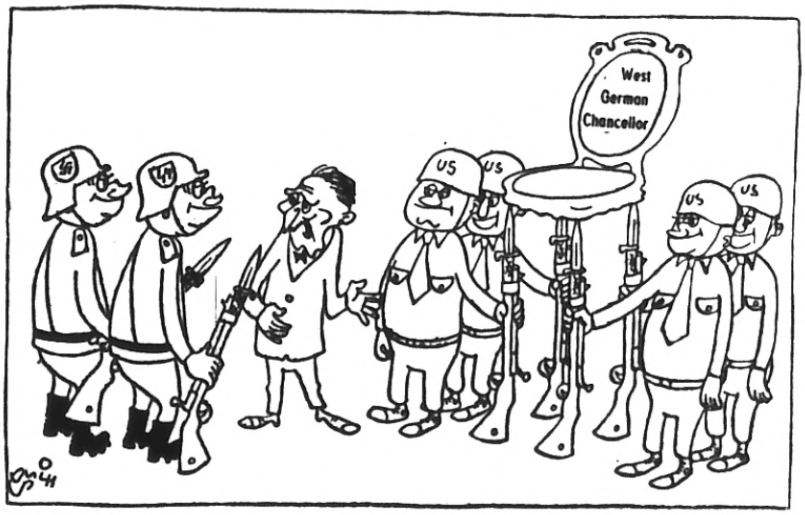
U.S. and Dutch Soldiers Ask Asylum

One U.S. soldier and two members of the Netherlands Army have asked for political asylum in the German Democratic Republic.

The U.S. soldier Normann M. Lowell junior, of Company "L" of the 6th Infantry Regiment, stated in his application to the Government of the Germany Democratic Republic:

"I have talked with many American soldiers and they all agree that this (American policy, ed.) leads only to a new world war. The American soldier does not want such a war. Most of them believe that people can live in peace."

The two Dutch soldiers who asked for asylum were Robert W. Louwman, army no. 320,119,228, and Robert Wanrooy, army no. 320,302,412.



Adenauer: Get in there and help. Then people won't be able to say that I am upheld only by American bayonets.

WARNING FOR DIPLOMATS: See page 5

"BIG FOUR SHOULD DISCUSS GERMANY" — SOVIET PROPOSAL

The Foreign Ministers of France, Great Britain, the United States and the Soviet Union should meet to discuss the German question, and the agenda should include all proposals made by both sides, the Soviet Government proposed in a note sent to the French, British and United States Governments on September 28th.

The proposals and counter proposals made by both sides for the solution of the German question are summarised below. The western proposals were contained in notes sent on September 23rd 1952, and on July 15th and September 2nd this year. The Soviet proposals were contained in notes sent on August 4th, August 15th and September 28th this year.

Western proposals

"The problem of free elections is... the key to any all-German settlement," stated the note of September 2nd. The previous notes had given more details of what the western powers understood by this. The western note of September 23rd 1952 had proposed that the Four Powers should discuss:

"the composition, functions and authority of an impartial commission of investigation **with a view to creating the conditions** necessary for free elections."

After this commission, under United Nations—predominantly U. S. —supervision had done its job, the "next step" would be "to discuss the arrangements" for holding elections.

The next western note, sent on July 15th this year, referred back to the "constructive proposals" made in the previous note, and the latest western note dated September 2nd also suggested "the meeting of the foreign ministers should... concentrate in the first instance on the question of free elections."

The western proposals would obviously have the effect of producing interminable discussions on the composition of investigating commissions, etc.

In the meantime, the U. S. Government, with the more or less reluctant aid of Britain and perhaps France, would be going ahead with the job of recreating the Wehrmacht in West Germany, and incorporating West Germany into the North Atlantic Block.

The "free elections" proposed by the western diplomats would therefore mean elections under full military occupation, with the Krupps and the Kesselrings in full control of positions of power: elections in which a big business press is in a position to work up stunts and scares, while police terrorise all progressive parties, arrest progressive candidates, and favour the militarists and reactionaries.

Soviet proposals

The Soviet proposals are much more detailed and concrete than the western proposals. They were set out fully in the Soviet Note of August 15th 1953, and can be summarised as follows:

1. A German Peace Conference should be summoned within six months, and there should be full German participation at all stages. Until an all-German Government is formed, representatives of the existing East German and West German Governments should take part.

2. A provisional all-German Government should be formed by the parliaments of East and West Germany. This Government should replace the two governments which exist at present. If this is not possible immediately, then a provisional all-German Government with limited functions should be established to function side-by-side with the present governments of East and West.

3. This provisional government should have the task of representing Germany in the preparation of a peace treaty. Its main task would be the preparation and holding of all-German free elections "in which the German people themselves will settle the problems of the social and state form of democratic Germany without the intervention of foreign states."

The provisional government would have the task of working out an electoral law "guaranteeing that the elections have a really democratic character, that all democratic organisations participate in the elections, and that pressure of the great monopolies on the electors is not permitted."

4. The financial and economic obligations of Germany arising from the war should be eased. The Soviet Union proposed that all reparations should cease, and that occupation costs should be reduced to not more than 5% of the budget in both East and West Germany. This clause has already been put into effect in East Germany, but in West Germany occupation costs amount to over 35% of the budget.

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In its note of August 15th the Soviet Union also repeated the draft of a peace treaty with Germany, which proposed the withdrawal of all occupation troops within one year and the closing of all military bases. Germany would be pledged not to enter into any coalition or military alliance directed against any of the war-time allies.

Poland Stands By Democratic Germany

Poland will spare no effort to help prevent the militarisation of West Germany and its conversion into a willing tool of the North Atlantic Block, Polish Prime Minister Boleslaw Bierut stated in a letter addressed to Otto Grotewohl, Prime Minister of the German Democratic Republic on October 2nd.

"The Polish people are fully aware of the great importance of the German Democratic Republic for the preservation of world peace, and for the strengthening of the bonds between our peoples, linked by our frontier of peace and friendship on the Oder and Neisse," Prime Minister Bierut's letter stated.

His letter was the reply to a letter sent by Prime Minister Grotewohl on September 15th, thanking the Polish Government and people for the great help given to the German Democratic Republic in the form of economic aid and the cancellation of reparations payments.

"The Government of the German Democratic Republic will do everything to render ineffective the renewed chauvinistic hate campaign waged by (West German Chancellor) Adenauer against the Polish People's Republic and against the Oder Neisse frontier of peace," Prime Minister Grotewohl's letter stated.

New Foreign Minister

Dr. Lothar Bolz, Chairman of the East German National Democratic Party, was appointed Foreign Minister of the German Democratic Republic on October 1st. He simultaneously retains his post as Deputy Prime Minister.

Dr. Bolz was formerly Minister for Construction. In December 1951 he presented the point of view of the German Democratic Republic on the subject of all-German elections to the UN General Assembly meeting in Paris.

WILHELM PIECK RE-ELECTED

East German President is Veteran Workers' Leader

Wilhelm Pieck, veteran German working class leader, was re-elected President of the German Democratic Republic for a further term of four years on October 7th, on the expiry of his first four-year term.

After the People's Chamber of the Republic had unanimously voted his re-election, President Pieck pledged himself to serve the best interests of the Republic and the whole German nation.

"In the past four years a great work of construction has been done in our Republic, thanks to the endeavours of the workers, peasants, technicians, engineers, scientists and artists", President Pieck stated.

"We have had the generous help of the Soviet Union and the People's Democracies in our work. We must and we shall develop our German Democratic Republic in such a fashion that all peace-loving Germans will come to regard it as the model for a united and democratic German state.

"It is in the national interest when we devote still more effort to attaining the democratic unity of peace-loving Germany. In the western part of our homeland the old forces of militarism and imperialism, who have led our people to national catastrophe twice before, are raising their heads again.

"Driven by egotism and thirst for revenge, they abandon the national interests of the German people and cooperate in the aggressive policies of American imperialism. The fateful consequences of this policy can only deepen the split within the country. This policy entails economic and militaristic preparations for war, and finally a war of destruction on German soil.

"There is another path open, however. This is the path of national unity and peace. In its note of September 28th the Soviet Union has proposed once again that a conference of foreign ministers should consider all aspects of the German problem. This includes the calling of a peace conference . . .; the establishment of a provisional all-German government and the holding of free all-German elections . . .

"The Soviet Government wants representatives of East and West Germany to attend the conference which will consider such decisive problems.

"I know that I can say in the name of all of us that the German Democratic Republic is ready and willing to take this path."

Who is President Pieck?

Here is a thumbnail sketch of the man at the helm of the German Democratic Republic, the first really democratic state which Germany has ever known:

Wilhelm Pieck was born on January 3rd 1876 in the little town of Guben, son of a carter and a laundry-woman. He learned the trade of carpenter, and in 1894 he became an active member of the Woodworkers' Union. One year later he joined the Social Democratic Party.

In Bremen, where he settled after he married, he became a respected trade union leader and teacher in workers' evening schools and study courses.

When the First World War came in 1914, most of the leaders of the German Social Democratic Party betrayed their principles of international solidarity and gave their support to the Kaiser's war; Pieck was one of the minority of clear-sighted members of the Party who condemned this step.

Together with Karl Liebknecht and Rosa Luxemburg he began to organise those opposed to the war, and in May 1915 he personally led the first open anti-war demonstration staged by Berlin women.

After being conscripted into the army and sentenced to five years for refusing to obey military orders, Wilhelm Pieck managed to escape to neutral Holland, where he organised the smuggling of anti-war propaganda into Germany.

One month before the end of the war he returned illegally to Berlin, and was one of the trade union leaders who signed the historic strike call to Berlin workers which precipitated the fall of the Kaiser and the end of the war in November 1918.

The Kaiser fled, but the generals and big businessmen remained, and they quickly went about the job of organising fascist bands to throttle the weak beginnings of German democracy.

In January 1919, Pieck, together with Socialist leaders Liebknecht and Luxemburg, was seized by one of these gangs. Pieck managed to conceal his identity, and thus avoided the fate of his friends, who were slaughtered in cold blood by the gang.

Through the years between the fall of the Kaiser and the rise of Hitler, Wilhelm Pieck was in the forefront of the battle for a decent Germany. After Hitler seized power in 1933, and communist leader Ernst Thaelmann had been arrested, Pieck led the underground anti-nazi fight of the German Communist Party, first from an illegal hide-out in Berlin itself, and later from abroad.

Returning to Berlin in 1945, Pieck put his entire strength into building a united working class party which would make the rise of another Hitler impossible, and only one year later he saw the fruits of his labour in the formation of the Socialist Unity Party, created by the fusion in East Germany of the Social Democratic Party and the Communist Party. In October 1949 he was elected first President of the German Democratic Republic.

A warning which Wilhelm Pieck gave to the world in 1937 is just as true today as it was then:

"The German militarists aim to light the fires of war not only in the east, but also in the west. They aim their policy of war against France, against Britain, against Belgium as well as against the Soviet Union."

Birthday Wishes From Malenkov

Soviet Prime Minister G. M. Malenkov, in a message of congratulation on the 4th Anniversary of the founding of the German Democratic Republic on October 7th, stated:

"The historic act of the formation of the German Democratic Republic linked the interests of the German people and of all peace-loving peoples . . . Progressive humanity regards the further consolidation of the German Democratic Republic as an important preliminary to the final solution of the German problem in the interests of peace and international security.

"The people of the Soviet Union wish the German people success in the restoration of their national unity and the creation of a peace-loving state. The German people will always have the sympathy and support of the peoples of the Soviet Union in their just struggle for a united, independent, peace-loving and democratic Germany."

FIGURES ON EDUCATION, HEALTH SERVICES IN EAST GERMANY

Exactly one third of the budget of the German Democratic Republic is being devoted to cultural, social and health services this year, Herr Willy Rumpf, State Secretary in the Ministry of Finance, told the People's Chamber of the German Democratic Republic on October 2nd 1953.

Herr Rumpf was introducing the revised budget made necessary by the new course in East Germany, under which the speed of heavy industrial construction has been slowed, and more emphasis placed on the production of consumer goods and the improvement of social services.

Here are some of the points made by Herr Rumpf in his budget declaration:

Education

Here are the figures of the sum in marks spent annually on each primary school child:

1951 — 232 marks
1952 — 241 marks
1953 — 286 marks.

(In considering all these figures it should be remembered that prices have not been rising in East Germany in the period under review.)

Expenditure per student at universities and technical colleges was:

1951 — 4125 marks
1952 — 5229 marks
1953 — 6200 marks.

In West Germany expenditure per university student amounted to only 1776 marks in 1951, and no figures have been made available since then. Calculated per head of the population, 8.90 marks were being spent in East Germany on higher education in 1951, and only 3.58 marks in West Germany.

Per high school student (ages 14—18) in the German Democratic Republic, expenditures were as follows:

1951 — 816 marks
1952 — 949 marks
1953 — 1003 marks.

Expenditure for stipends paid to young people attending all types of schools in the German Democratic Republic rose as follows:

1951 — 131 million marks
1952 — 193 million marks
1953 — 260 million marks.

In 1951, 89% of all university students received stipends, in 1952, 93.5% and in 1953, 94%.

In East Germany the average class in primary schools consists of between 33 and 35 pupils; in country districts the average is 28. In West Germany, in the province of North Rhine Westphalia, for instance, the average class consists of 50 pupils.

In the German Democratic Rebublic teachers receive a starting salary of 405 marks per month; in West Germany the starting salary for teachers is between 160 marks and 200 marks.

Expenditure in East Germany on nursery schools was as follows:

1951 — 70 million marks
1952 — 100 million marks
1953 — 135.6 million marks.

In addition, factories spent large sums on their own nursery schools, and these sums were practically doubled between 1951 and 1953.

Health Services

Expenditure on health services, calculated per head of the population, rose as follows:

1951 — 99.50 marks
1952 — 113 marks
1953 — 119.80 marks.

Total expenditure devoted by the Social Insurance System to the health services was:

1951 — 944 million marks
1952 — 1485 million marks
1953 — 1737.9 million marks.

The Social Insurance provides our workers with considerably better treatment than the insurance system in West Germany. In West Germany, workers who fall sick get only 50% of their wages, and that is only paid out from the fourth day of sickness onwards. In East Germany, sick pay amounting to 90% of the wage is paid from the very first day of sickness.

In East Germany the insured person and his family get free medicine, free dentures, and no prescription fee is payable. In West Germany family members have to pay prescription fees and contribute towards the cost of the medicine, and both the insured person and family members have to pay between 40% and 70% of the cost of dentures.

Pensions

Average monthly pensions, including orphans' pensions and half-pensions, rose in the following manner:

1951 — 65.56 marks
1952 — 67.80 marks
1953 — 75.75 marks.

Average pensions for miners increased from 99.75 marks in 1951 to 131.48 marks in 1952.

Today minimum pensions for old-age pensioners and fully incapacitated persons amount to 75 marks in East Germany. In West Germany the minimum is 50 marks. A supplement of 34.50 marks is paid for the children of pensioners in East Germany; in West Germany the supplement amounts to only 20 marks.

"Life Gets Better in East" — West German Bankers

Confirmation of the steady rise in the standard of living in East Germany is given in a confidential memorandum drawn up by the "Bank Deutscher Laender", the West German state bank. A copy of the memorandum, which was prepared at the end of September for the internal use of the West German authorities, is now in the hands of GERMAN REPORT.

Here are some interesting extracts:

"The real and nominal value of the national income in the East Zone (the German Democratic Republic, ed.) has risen steadily since 1950.

"The prices of rationed foodstuffs, rent, transport and public services are approximately 10 to 15% lower than in West Germany.

"Persons employed in the professions are paid 50% to 100% more than in similar situations in West Germany. Specially successful workers are paid high, and progressively rising, proficiency premiums. In addition a study of the tables of wages paid in industry gives the impression that they are also somewhat higher than in West Germany.

"Minimum pensions paid by the social security system exceed similar payments in the Federal Republic (West Germany, ed.) by between one tenth and one fifth.

"Net incomes in the East Zone are between 10% and 20% higher than in West Germany."

The bank memorandum goes on to make proposals for "adjusting" the high wages in East Germany in the event of German reunification:

"The excessive height of wages in East Germany could be reduced by abolishing the exaggerated system of payment by results and the payment of premiums. A further reduction could be brought about by introducing West German wage tariffs into East Germany."

WARNING TO DIPLOMATS

Open Letter To The British Embassy in Athens

In the near future you are going to see a new face in your midst—that of the new West German Ambassador to Greece, Theo Kordt.

At diplomatic receptions Herr Kordt, who speaks excellent English, will probably tell you of the astonishing and dangerous jobs he did as member of an anti-nazi "resistance movement" when he was a member of Hitler's diplomatic service, before and during the war. He will almost certainly casually drop the names of his "friends" in London—Lord Vansittart, Lord Halifax, and others.

But he will probably not tell you about his activity in purchasing for Hitler secret documents stolen from British Embassies; his part in providing the nazis with the means of breaking British diplomatic cipher; or his part in pin-pointing targets in Britain for nazi bombers.

For Herr Theo Kordt, who served the nazis faithfully in Ribbentrop's Foreign Office, did all these things during the war, at the same time as he was maintaining contact with British intelligence agents as a form of "insurance" against Hitler's defeat.

You do not believe these charges? Then read and ponder this evidence, given by Theo Kordt himself under cross examination by American prosecuting counsel in the trial of nazi diplomats in Nuremberg in 1948.

The trial was presided over by Judge W. C. Christianson of Minnesota. On July 15th 1948, Theo Kordt, who was appearing at the trial as a witness, gave these answers to Dr. Robert W. Kempner, the U. S. Prosecutor:

Q. ... during the period (when Kordt was attached to the nazi embassy in Berne, Switzerland) ... you were also in contact with the British intermediaries in your peace and resistance efforts, isn't that correct?

A. Yes.

Q. At that time ... you certainly were doing nothing to harm British interests, were you?

A. Nothing that would be contrary to my official duties and my personal convictions.

Q. Now do you recall that in December 1939 you were the person selected to go to Italy?

A. Yes.

Q. ... for the examination of black-market documents of the British Foreign Office and its missions in Italy?

A. I know what you are referring to.

Q. ... were there just a few documents or more ... ?

A. ... There were two hand suitcases full.

Herr Kordt admitted under further cross examination that the documents had been stolen from the British Embassy in Rome, and that he had recommended to his nazi masters that they should be purchased. He claimed that they were "amusing but unimportant" until the prosecution showed him a telegram which he himself had sent to the nazi Foreign Ministry, advising the purchase of these stolen documents because they included copies of cipher telegrams amongst them which could be used in breaking British codes. Then he admitted weakly "all countries make that effort ..."

Q. Now, subsequently you saw ... your British friends. Did you discuss with them the fact that these documents were now in German hands?

A. No.

During the same period of cross examination Theo Kordt admitted that he had transmitted to the nazi air force information about air targets in Britain which he had received from the German Embassy in Dublin.

The direct quotations above from the Nuremberg Trial evidence are taken from the illuminating book "In the Nazi Era" by Sir Lewis Namier, published by Macmillan, London, 1952. Noted historian Namier, summed up his impressions of Theo Kordt and his brother Erich Kordt (Obersturmbannfuehrer in the S. S., now professor in West German Diplomatic Academy) in these words:

"Theo Kordt asserted that he did nothing beyond 'what a diplomat of every country has to do for his own country.' This may be true—except that the Kordts should not at the same time have claimed the confidence of Englishmen, nor should they try now to represent their own ... war activities as something which they were not: the primary aim for which they worked was Germany's victory, and next, reinsurance in case of defeat."

So we suggest that British, and other, diplomats in Athens should lock up their documents very securely, and keep their hands on their wallets when this diplomatic fence is around.

But perhaps the diplomatic corps there is used to meeting unsavoury individuals as West German representatives: after all the previous West German Minister to Athens was a certain Werner Ferdinand Karl Alexander von Grundherr.

Under nazi foreign minister Ribbentrop, von Grundherr headed the Scandinavian section of the ministry. When, during the war, Sweden offered to give refuge to Jewish children from Denmark, Grundherr signed the cable turning down the offer.

When S. S. General Werner Best, nazi governor of occupied Denmark, reported that he intended to deport 6000 Jews with their wives and children to the gas chambers, Grundherr cabled back: "How many S. S. men do you need?"

At the Nuremberg trials von Grundherr testified that he had given the first financial assistance to Quisling, Norwegian traitor.

After von Grundherr's bloody past history was publicised last year, he was allowed to resign. According to official West German statistics, however, 85 percent of leading Foreign Ministry officials were formerly members of the nazi party.

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Berlin W 8,
Germany.

NATIONAL PRIZE FOR LION FEUCHTWANGER

The National Prize of the German Democratic Republic was awarded on October 7th to Lion Feuchtwanger, great German writer who now lives in Pacific Palisades, California, U.S.A.

Dr. Feuchtwanger is best known in Britain and America for his historical novels "Jew Suess" and "The Ugly Duchess".

The citation accompanying the award of the National Prize stated that it was being given to Dr. Feuchtwanger for "his great creative work, dedicated to the fight for humanity and democracy, which takes an important place in contemporary German literature." Many of Dr. Feuchtwanger's novels have appeared in very large editions in East Germany.

The other recipients of the National Prize, First Class, were Professor Serge von Bubnoff, outstanding geologist; Professor Hermann Haack, leading geographer; Professor Helmut Hasse of Hamburg University, West Germany, famed mathematician; and Professor Paul Uhlenhuth, Director of the State Research Laboratory at Freiburg, West Germany.

Other National Prizes went to artists such as actress Helene Weigel; sculptor Fritz Cremer; composers Paul Dessau and Eberhard Schmidt and dramatists Heinar Kipphardt and Erwin Strittmatter.

Prizes for technical achievements went to such men as engineers Siegfried Bowens and Ludwig Mueller, who developed new methods for high-speed repairs on electro-generators; six leading members of the agricultural production cooperative in the village of Aschersleben who have made their cooperative into a model for the whole Republic; and four technicians of the Berlin Lamp Works who developed new methods of making infra-red ray apparatus.

FRIEDRICH WOLF DIES

Friedrich Wolf, German author, dramatist and fighter for peace, died at his home near Berlin on October 5th, shortly before his 65th birthday.

The dramatist, best known in the English-speaking world for his anti-war play "The Sailors of Cattaro" and his powerful anti-nazi film, made in the Soviet Union, "Professor Mamlock", was born in the Rhineland in 1888.

In the first world war he served as a military doctor on the Western Front, but was locked up in a lunatic asylum by the militarists when he openly protested against the imperialist murder.

Released by the German revolution in 1918, he became member of the Soldiers' Council in Remscheid, in the Ruhr, and when the right-wing German militarists tried to seize open power again in the Kapp Putsch of 1920 he led a detachment of Socialist and Communist workers who fought the fascists. Captured and sentenced to death by the fascist troops, he was saved by the breakdown of the putsch attempt.

In 1928 Friedrich Wolf, who had in the meantime given up his doctor's practice and become a dramatist, joined the Communist Party.

Driven from Germany by Hitler, he continued to fight against fascism and imperialist war, and in the Second World War he worked both as doctor and as educator amongst the German prisoners of war in the Soviet Union. For this work he was decorated with the Order of the Red Banner by the Supreme Soviet.

Back in Germany after 1945 Friedrich Wolf was one of those who worked to build for the first time a really democratic German state — the German Democratic Republic. From 1949—51 he was the first ambassador of the German Democratic Republic in Warsaw.

Despite his political activity, Friedrich Wolf found time to write, and was responsible for the script of the East German film "Council of the Gods", exposing the criminal activities of IG Farben, the German chemical monopoly.

For his literary work Friedrich Wolf was twice decorated with the National Prize of the German Democratic Republic.

Korean Children in East Germany

Four hundred Korean children, aged between nine and fifteen, arrived in East Germany on October 11th. The children will join the two hundred other Korean children who have been in East Germany since March, studying to fit themselves to take a full part in the reconstruction of their war-torn country.

Heavy Sentences for Spies and Agents

East German courts have passed heavy sentences on members of American-financed espionage and sabotage groups in the past few weeks.

At the beginning of October the Magdeburg District Court found Albrecht Gessler guilty of incitement to murder, racial hatred and war propaganda, and sentenced him to death. As far back as 1947 and 1948 Gessler used American military equipment to blow up two trains near Magdeburg, and had continued his career of sabotage until caught recently.

The same court passed sentence of life imprisonment on Kurt Gross, former nazi and concentration camp watchman, who had carried out espionage jobs for a West Berlin spy ring, and who had also tried to blow up the main transformer in the film factory where he worked.

The Leipzig District Court sentenced two men to life imprisonment on October 1st, and five other accused were sent to prison for terms ranging from 8 to 15 years on charges of espionage, sabotage and preparing war.

SPECIAL APPEAL TO READERS IN BRITAIN

The Margate Conference of the Labour Party has shown that the British labour movement is aware of the great peril of West German remilitarisation.

It is vitally necessary that every active supporter of the labour movement should have the facts in this fight.

This is where you come in. Many thousands of people in Britain would like to read GERMAN REPORT regularly, but they are unaware of its existence.

We shall be glad to send them specimen copies of a few issues, but to do this we need their names and addresses.

Please sit down, right now, and write in block capitals the names and addresses of at least five active Labour Party members or trade unionists in your district. Stick a 4d stamp on the envelope and send it to:

D. G. R.
167 Friedrich Strasse
Berlin W 8
Germany.

Luftwaffe Back

The nazi Luftwaffe is back again. Only on paper so far, but arrangements are already far advanced in West Germany for the re-establishment of the bomber squadrons which once smashed London and Coventry.

And the new Luftwaffe already has its newspaper, freely on sale at West German bookstalls. The September number of this militaristic publication, which describes itself "Luftwaffenring—Information Bulletin for former members of the Luftwaffe", includes such peaceful articles as these:

Notes on re-training pilots for high-speed flight; 2 cm Mountain A. A. guns as rearguard weapons; Assessing the Air Attack Situation.

But the real spirit of the paper comes out best, perhaps, in the list of notable anniversaries, printed in the August issue:

17. 8. 17 — 200th victory of the Richthofen Squadron.

18. 8. 40 — Squadron 76 shot down 51 British planes over the Channel and South England.

1. 9. 39 — Start of the Polish campaign.

2. 9. 14 — First Zeppelin raid on Antwerp in First World War.

12. 9. 43 — German parachutists rescue Mussolini from prison.

British Secret Service Wire-taps

British officials in West Germany maintain a big system of wire-tapping for supervising the telephone conversations of members of peace organisations and progressive political parties, the West German news-magazine "Spiegel" disclosed on September 30th.

In Hamburg alone about 800 phone lines are under constant observation. The work is supervised by a British official named F. H. Flicker, who drives to his work in the Hamburg Telephone Exchange in Schlueter Strasse in a British Army car No. 17 XG 82.

The secret wire-tapping, prohibited by the West German Constitution, is carried out in Rooms 450 and 451 in this telephone exchange.

German sources suggest that the tapping is not used only to keep track of progressive political movements, but also to gain commercial information valuable to British export firms competing with Hamburg exporters.

SPIKE THAT LIE!

"Herr Ulbricht said that this would bring the end of rationing (in East Germany, ed.) of meats, fats, milk and sugar next summer... Few East Germans will believe this promise at a time when their pitifully inadequate meat and fat rations are never honoured and when they have stale fish and skimmed milk cheese palmed off on them instead."

Manchester Guardian, September 21st 1953

October 12th 1953

The Honourable Terence Prittie,
Manchester Guardian Correspondent
Bundespressehaus,
Bonn, West Germany.

Sir,

I presume that you are responsible for the nonsensical dispatch quoted above, since it appeared in the Manchester Guardian under a Bonn dateline and marked "From Our Own Correspondent".

We shall see for ourselves next year whether rationing is abolished in East Germany or not, and I have no objection to speculation about this on your part. But the rest of the paragraph quoted is so full of inaccuracies that I do not know where to begin.

Let us take it point by point:

"Pitifully inadequate meat and fat rations..."

I have before me statistics on a coal miner living in Halle, East Germany. His ration cards are one heavy workers' card, one basic card for his wife who does not go out to work, and two children's cards. The four members of his family get every month, on their cards, 9 lbs 15 ozs of fats and 12 lbs 6 ozs of meat. These figures do not compare badly with the quantities available on the ration to consumers in Britain, and people in East Germany can supplement them by purchases on the free market at rather higher prices.

In any case they can hardly be described as "pitifully inadequate".

"Rations are never honoured..."

In April and May this year there were difficulties in meeting the fat ration, and meat was issued on some of the coupons which would normally have been met by fat. These temporary difficulties were quickly overcome, and since June, to the best of my knowledge, all rations have been fully honoured in every part of the Republic.

Your statement, Mr. Prittie, that "rations are never honoured", is, to put it bluntly, a thumping lie.

It is, in fact, rather like saying "It never rains in England", because it did not rain there once for a week.

"They have stale fish and skimmed milk cheese palmed off on them instead."

This phrase just shows that you are completely out of touch with events in East Germany, and do not even trouble to read the East German newspapers available to you.

Fish was taken finally off the ration in East Germany in July this year, and since then fish, whether stale or fresh, has certainly not been "palmed off" on anyone on ration cards. In previous years, when the food shortage was still acute, cheese was occasionally issued in lieu of meat. I have not heard of this happening for two or three years, and I am certain it has not happened recently.

But I am grateful to you for your article, nevertheless. I make regular lecture trips in the German Democratic Republic to speak about the big business press in the western world. Your paragraph, packed as it is with easily verifiable misinformation, will get a good laugh when I read it to the audiences.

A copy of this letter will be published in the next issue of GERMAN REPORT. If you have any comments, I shall be glad to consider printing them in a subsequent issue. I am sure that my readers will be eager to hear what you have to say in your defence.

I am etc.,

John Peet

BERLIN NOTEBOOK

By John Peet

A letter has just arrived on my desk from a reader in London which I think is worth answering here. The reader states:

"A friend of mine for whose integrity and intelligence I have the greatest respect, has just returned from a holiday in Germany, including a visit to Berlin and a short trip into the Soviet Sector. Many of her impressions are almost exactly the opposite of those I have obtained from reading GERMAN REPORT, and I would be very glad if you could comment on them."

Gladly. Here goes.

Rubble Uncleared

"1. East Berlin gives the impression of uncleared rubble except for Stalin Allee, which is a fine job, but the only bit of rebuilding done (a total of 2,000 flats being all the new housing which has been accomplished to date."

There is a lot of uncleared rubble in East Berlin, of course, but visitors from the West Sectors get a particularly bad first impression because the main entry streets into East Berlin run through the old business centre of Berlin, which was practically blotted out in the bombing. This area has not been cleared up as much as other parts because priority has been given to house building, which is taking place in other areas.

The huge Stalin Allee project is by no means the only bit of building done, though this is a favourite lie in the West Berlin press. During 1952 well over 5000 new apartments were provided in the Democratic Sector, and the figure will probably be higher this year, particularly since the introduction of the new course in Government policy which provided the supplementary sum of 600 million marks to be spent on house building this year.

The next time the doubter visits Berlin, she should take a longer trip through the Democratic Sector. In every second or third street she will find building gangs at work repairing bombed-out buildings and erecting new ones.

Tidy Activity

"2. In contrast, West Berlin is tidied up in much the same way as the City of London, and 28,000 houses or flats have been built. The impression is of life and activity on the western side, dreary uncleared rubble on the East."

My answer to the previous question answers part of this. There are big areas of uncleared rubble in West Berlin too (north of Nollendorf Platz, for instance, in the British Sector), but the main roads do not pass through them. In addition it should not be forgotten that West Berlin has a standing army of 300,000 unemployed, and various "make work" schemes, including rubble clearance, have helped to get rid of some of the ruins. In East Berlin there is no unemployment and no reservoir of cheap labour.

About the building in West Berlin. Firstly the main new buildings have been banks and insurance firms, plus luxury shops on the Kurfuerstendamm. Secondly I am very suspicious about the 28,000 figure. The last time I looked very closely at one of these figures provided by the West Berlin authorities I found it included all the housing planned for the next few years, including many projects which could not be completed for lack of funds.

But even if the figure should turn out to be correct, then one must ask "houses or flats for whom?" The vast majority of the apartments built in West Berlin in the past few years have been luxury dwellings let at very high rents, and generally entailing the payment of thousands of marks of "key money" before they can be occupied. In East Berlin, all new and repaired buildings are let at moderate rents, within the reach of everybody, and workers who are doing vital reconstruction work get highest priority in the allotment of new flats.

Police Orphans

"The People's Police are youngsters of 17 or so, with no real training... As a consequence the police are mainly composed of the rootless orphans and youth gangs which resulted from the war."

If the disciplined, helpful and friendly young men of the People's Police were formerly "rootless orphans and youth gangs," then the job of training them has been outstanding. In West Germany nobody has troubled to do anything much for the "lost generation" of youth left by the war.

But of course the People's Police are not recruited mainly from such elements. Outstandingly successful young workers, and leading members of the Free German Youth organisation are proud to volunteer for duty, and as a result, for the first time in German history, part at least of Germany has a police force which is not made up of reactionary retired sergeant-majors—or worse.

My correspondent also applies the phrase "simple yokel boys" to some members of the police. I recently gave a lecture in one of the basic training schools for the police, and after the lecture I was flooded with questions showing a grasp of world affairs and economics which I would be pleased to note amongst, let us say, British university students.

Even if they were "simple yokels," I should prefer police of that type to the veteran nazi bruisers and young S. S. men who make up a large proportion of the police forces in West Germany.

War Memorial

"4. The Russians have built a second war memorial as a counterblast to the airlift... It would have been better to have shown what the Russians could build up in the way of something useful."

There is a large cemetery and memorial to the fallen heroes of the Soviet Army in Treptow in East Berlin. Most of the bodies of the over ten thousand Soviet soldiers who died in the battle for Berlin alone are buried here. The construction of the memorial began long before the "air-lift" which the Americans operated in 1948 and 1949 was ever contemplated, and there is absolutely no connection of any sort between the two things.

The great memorial, which even manages to impress the parties of brash G. I.s who visit it on sightseeing trips each Sunday, shows a Soviet soldier with a child on his arm trampling a broken swastika.

Is it useful? Well, apart from providing a worthy memorial to the fallen, I can conceive few things more useful than reminding very many Germans (and others) how the nazi offensive against the Soviet Union ended; and reminding them too of the enormous sacrifices which the victory over nazism entailed.

And just incidentally: What "useful" things have the Americans, British and French built in West Germany? I can only think of airfields, ammunition dumps, and artillery ranges.

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